

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 08305 101206Z

11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 EB-07 COME-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 FEA-01 OES-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /071 W

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P 101145Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4084

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ENRG IS

SUBJ: OIL EXPLORATION IN ISRAEL

REFS: (A) STATE 295273; (B) TEL AVIV 7742

1. MAIN POINTS IN REF A WERE PASSED TO MANAGING DIRECTOR LIOR OF ISRAEL NATIONAL OIL COMPANY ON DECEMBER 10. WE STRESSED THAT FOR USG TO MAKE A FURTHER APPROACH TO SCHLUMBERGER, WE WOULD HAVE TO KNOW WHETHER LOGGING SERVICES WERE INTENDED FOR EXPLORATION WORK IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AS WELL AS IN ISRAEL PROPER.

2. LIOR SAID THAT HE WAS WELL AWARE OF U.S. POSITION ON THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. HOWEVER, INOC WAS ENGAGED IN EXTENSIVE OIL EXPLORATION IN ISRAEL PROPER WHERE THERE IS AN IMMEDIATE NEED FOR COMPETENT LOGGING SERVICES. HE NOTED THAT SUBSEQUENT TO OUR OCT 22 CONVERSATION (REF B), THE NEED FOR SCHLUMBERGER'S SERVICES HAD BECOME EVEN MORE PRESSING. FOR EXAMPLE, INOC IS NOW ENGAGED IN DEEP DRILLING AT THE HELETZ FIELD NEAR ASHKELON AND THEY HAVE ALREADY DRILLED DOWN BEYOND ISRAEL'S CURRENT LOGGING CAPABILITY. THIS, IN A SENSE, THEY ARE DRILLING BLIND ALTHOUGH HELETZ IS THE SITE OF ISRAEL' ONLY PRODUCING OIL WELL AND THE PROSPECTS ARE RELATIVELY GOOD. HE SAID THAT THERE ARE OTHER AREAS IN ISRAEL WHERE THEY WOULD LIKE TO DRILL BUT HESITATE TO GO TO THE EXPENSE WITHOUT GOOD LOGGING DATA.

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 08305 101206Z

3. THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, HE SAID, WOULD BE MOST APPRECIATIVE

OF OUR ASSISTANCE IN PERSUADING SCHLUMBERGER TO PERFORM LOGGING SERVICES IN ISRAEL. INDOC IS PREPARED TO DISCUSS ANY ARRANGMENT THAT SHCLUMBERGER MAY DESIRE--"DIRECT , INDIRECT, THROUGH A THIRD PARTY, OR WHATEVER". AS FOR THE AREA OF WORK, THE CONTRACT COULD BE FOR LOGGING SERVICES AT HELETZ WITH THE OPTION FOR ADDITIONAL WORK IN THE AFULA REGION. TO THIS END, LIOR ASKED IF DEPT COULD ARRANGE APPOINTMENT WITH SCHLUMBERGER FOR INOC CONSULTATANT AND GEOLOGIST ELIE ROSENBERG, WHO WILL BE IN THE U.S. LATER THIS MONTH. HE SAID THAT ROSENBERG HAD BEEN IN CONTACT IN THE PAST WITH SCHLUMBERGER IN NEW YORK AND IN PARIS AND HAS FULL AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE FOR INOC.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: LIOR'S PROPOSED APPROACH SEEMS REASONABLE TO US AND WE HOPE THAT DEPT CAN FACILITATE AN APPOINTMENT FOR ROSENBERG WITH APPROPRIATE SCHLUMBERGER PEOPLE. SINCE BOTH THE ISRAELIS AND SCHLUMBERGER ARE AWARE OF U.S. POLICY ON OIL EXPLORATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, THAT ASPECT SHOULD NOT BE AN OBSTACLE TO A DEAL BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES. (INCIDENTALLY, LIOR NOTED IN PASSING THAT SCHLUMBERGER HAD IN FACT SOLD LOGGING EQUIPMENT TO THE MEXICANS FIVE OR SIX YEARS AGO.)
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